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UN wives ask Mrs Assad to stop Syria violence

19th April, 2012

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

The wives of the British and German ambassadors to the United Nations have released a video addressed directly to Asma al-Assad, wife of Syria's leader. It is part of an online campaign designed to urge Mrs al-Assad to help stop the killing in her country that has now gone on for over a year. The video is titled: "A letter to Asma al Assad, signed by women all over the world." Sheila Lyall Grant, wife of Britain's UN Ambassador Mark Lyall and her German counterpart, Huberta von Voss-Wittig, ask Mrs Assad to "stand up for peace...for the sake of your people". The video contrasts the glamorous lifestyle of Mrs Assad with that of Syrian women running for their lives in battle-scarred Syrian streets.

Mrs Assad, 36, was born and raised in west London. She married her husband Bashar al-Assad in 2000, the year he became Syrian president. She has spent the past decade looking after her husband's international image. She has recently come under criticism for her shopping expeditions in luxury London stores while 7,000 opposition Syrians lost their lives in various Syrian cities. The video addresses her by her first name many times to make the plea more personal. A voice says: "Some women care for style, and some women care for their people. Some women struggle for their image, and some women struggle for survival." It reminds Asma that: "No one cares about your image we care about your actions."

WARM-UPS

1. SYRIA VIOLENCE: Walk around the class and talk to other students about the violence in Syria. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

ambassadors / video / online campaign / counterpart / stand up for / glamorous / raised / past decade / international image / shopping expeditions / struggle

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. PEACE: What's the best way to bring peace to Syria? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

	Pros	Cons
Plea to Mrs Assad		
Military invasion		
Economic boycott		
Regional talks		
Aid for opposition		
UN diplomacy		

4. FALL: Students A **strongly** believe Syria's president Bashar al-Assad will fall; Students B **strongly** believe not. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. ASMA: What's the best way to get Asma al-Assad to help bring peace to Syria? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- online video
- freeze her bank accounts
- ban her from shopping in London
- a global campaign to write to her
- pleas from the families of those killed
- pressure from the United Nations
- threat from International Criminal Court
- other _____

6. AMBASSADOR: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'ambassador'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. Ambassadors wives started a campaign to bring peace to Syria. T / F
- b. Syrian president Assad's wife appealed online to wives of UN workers. T / F
- c. The wives of three UN ambassadors are responsible for the campaign. T / F
- d. A video highlights how Syria's presidents' wife's life is a little different. T / F
- e. Syria's president married his London-born wife while he was president. T / F
- f. Asma al-Assad shopped in London while people were dying in Syria T / F
- g. The video never called Asma by her own name. T / F
- h. The video says no one is interested in Asma al-Assad's image. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. ambassadors | a. slaughter |
| 2. urge | b. appeal |
| 3. killing | c. opposite number |
| 4. counterpart | d. reputation |
| 5. glamorous | e. trips |
| 6. raised | f. diplomats |
| 7. image | g. glossy |
| 8. expeditions | h. fight |
| 9. plea | i. encourage |
| 10. struggle | j. brought up |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. ambassadors to the | a. for peace |
| 2. a video addressed directly | b. by her first name |
| 3. stand up | c. Syrian streets |
| 4. for the sake | d. more personal |
| 5. battle-scarred | e. United Nations |
| 6. the past | f. survival |
| 7. shopping | g. of your people |
| 8. The video addresses her | h. decade |
| 9. make the plea | i. to Asma al-Assad |
| 10. some women struggle for | j. expeditions |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The wives of the British and German ambassadors to the United Nations have (1) _____ a video addressed directly to Asma al-Assad, wife of Syria's leader. It is part of an online (2) _____ designed to (3) _____ Mrs al-Assad to help stop the killing in her country that has now (4) _____ on for over a year. The video is titled: "A letter to Asma al Assad, signed by women all over the world." Sheila Lyall Grant, wife of Britain's UN Ambassador Mark Lyall and her German (5) _____, Huberta von Voss-Wittig, ask Mrs Assad to "(6) _____ up for peace...for the (7) _____ of your people". The video contrasts the glamorous lifestyle of Mrs Assad with that of Syrian women running for their lives in battle-(8) _____ Syrian streets.

counterpart

urge

sake

gone

released

scarred

campaign

stand

Mrs Assad, 36, was born and (9) _____ in west London. She married her husband Bashar al-Assad in 2000, the year he became Syrian president. She has spent the (10) _____ decade looking after her husband's international image. She has recently come under (11) _____ for her shopping expeditions in luxury London stores while 7,000 opposition Syrians lost their lives in (12) _____ Syrian cities. The video addresses her by her first name many times to make the (13) _____ more personal. A voice says: "Some women care for (14) _____, and some women care for their people. Some women struggle for their image, and some women (15) _____ for survival." It reminds Asma that: "No one cares about your image we care about your (16) _____."

style

criticism

past

struggle

raised

actions

plea

various

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

The wives of the British and German _____ United Nations have released a video addressed directly to Asma al-Assad, wife of Syria's leader. It is part of an online campaign _____ Mrs al-Assad to help stop the killing in her country that has now gone on for over a year. _____: "A letter to Asma al Assad, signed by women all over the world." Sheila Lyall Grant, wife of Britain's UN Ambassador Mark Lyall and her _____, Huberta von Voss-Wittig, ask Mrs Assad to "stand up for peace... _____ your people". The video contrasts the glamorous lifestyle of Mrs Assad with that of Syrian women running for their lives _____ Syrian streets.

Mrs Assad, 36, was _____ west London. She married her husband Bashar al-Assad in 2000, the year he became Syrian president. She has spent _____ looking after her husband's international image. She has recently come under criticism for her shopping _____ London stores while 7,000 opposition Syrians lost their lives in various Syrian cities. The video addresses her by her first name many times to make the _____. A voice says: "Some women care for style, and some women care for their people. Some women struggle for their image, and some women _____." It reminds Asma that: "No one cares _____ we care about your actions."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'online' and 'campaign'.

online	campaign
---------------	-----------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wives• urge• gone• titled• stand• battle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• west• past• lost• plea• image• reminds
---	---

SYRIA VIOLENCE SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

Write five GOOD questions about Syria violence in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

SYRIA VIOLENCE DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'ambassador'?
- c) What do you think of the idea of sending the video to Asma al-Assad?
- d) What do you think can stop the killing in Syria?
- e) Do you think more ambassadors' wives should take part?
- f) Do you think Mrs Assad will care if women all over the world write to her?
- g) How much do you think Mrs Assad cares for "her people"?
- h) Do you think Mrs Assad has any influence over her husband regarding the situation in Syria?

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SYRIA VIOLENCE DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) How Syrian do you think Mrs Assad feels, having grown up in London?
- c) Do you think Mrs Assad can do anything for her husband's international image?
- d) What do you think of Mrs Assad going shopping in London while other Syrian women die on the streets?
- e) What can Mrs Assad do to restore her image?
- f) Where do you think Syria will be ten years from now?
- g) What do you think Syrian woman think of Mrs Assad?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Asma al-Assad?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1204/120419-asma_al_assad.html

The wives of the British and German ambassadors to the United Nations have released a video (1) _____ directly to Asma al-Assad, wife of Syria's leader. It is part of an online campaign (2) _____ to urge Mrs al-Assad to help stop the killing in her country that has now gone on for over a year. The video is (3) _____: "A letter to Asma al Assad, signed by women all over the world." Sheila Lyall Grant, wife of Britain's UN Ambassador Mark Lyall and her German (4) _____, Huberta von Voss-Wittig, ask Mrs Assad to "stand up for peace...for the (5) _____ of your people". The video contrasts the glamorous lifestyle of Mrs Assad with that of Syrian women running for their lives in battle-(6) _____ Syrian streets.

Mrs Assad, 36, was born and (7) _____ in west London. She married her husband Bashar al-Assad in 2000, the year he became Syrian president. She has spent the (8) _____ decade looking after her husband's international image. She has recently come (9) _____ criticism for her shopping expeditions in luxury London stores while 7,000 opposition Syrians lost their lives in (10) _____ Syrian cities. The video addresses her by her first name many times to make the (11) _____ more personal. A voice says: "Some women care for style, and some women care for their people. Some women struggle for their image, and some women struggle for (12) _____." It reminds Asma that: "No one cares about your image we care about your actions."

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) addressing | (b) address | (c) addresses | (d) addressed |
| 2. | (a) cultured | (b) highlighted | (c) designed | (d) pressed |
| 3. | (a) painted | (b) titled | (c) enticed | (d) willed |
| 4. | (a) counterpart | (b) countryman | (c) countrified | (d) countryside |
| 5. | (a) sale | (b) same | (c) sake | (d) sane |
| 6. | (a) scary | (b) scored | (c) screamed | (d) scarred |
| 7. | (a) increased | (b) raised | (c) upped | (d) heightened |
| 8. | (a) past | (b) upcoming | (c) ten-year | (d) annual |
| 9. | (a) over | (b) under | (c) through | (d) inside |
| 10. | (a) varies | (b) variety | (c) various | (d) vicarious |
| 11. | (a) plea | (b) melee | (c) flee | (d) free |
| 12. | (a) pylon | (b) fence | (c) jewel | (d) survival |

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about the video address to Asma al-Assad. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. SYRIA VIOLENCE: Make a poster about Syria violence. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. ASMA: Write a magazine article about Asma al-Assad. Include an imaginary interview with her.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Asma al-Assad. Ask her three questions about the violence in Syria. Give her three thoughts on what she should do. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. F d. T e. F f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. ambassadors | a. diplomats |
| 2. urge | b. appeal |
| 3. killing | c. slaughter |
| 4. counterpart | d. opposite number |
| 5. glamorous | e. glossy |
| 6. raised | f. brought up |
| 7. image | g. reputation |
| 8. expeditions | h. trips |
| 9. plea | i. encourage |
| 10. struggle | j. fight |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. ambassadors to the | a. United Nations |
| 2. a video addressed directly | b. to Asma al-Assad |
| 3. stand up | c. for peace |
| 4. for the sake | d. of your people |
| 5. battle-scarred | e. Syrian streets |
| 6. the past | f. decade |
| 7. shopping | g. expeditions |
| 8. The video addresses her | h. by her first name |
| 9. make the plea | i. more personal |
| 10. some women struggle for | j. survival |

GAP FILL:

UN wives ask Mrs Assad to stop Syria violence

The wives of the British and German ambassadors to the United Nations have (1) **released** a video addressed directly to Asma al-Assad, wife of Syria's leader. It is part of an online (2) **campaign** designed to (3) **urge** Mrs al-Assad to help stop the killing in her country that has now (4) **gone** on for over a year. The video is titled: "A letter to Asma al Assad, signed by women all over the world." Sheila Lyall Grant, wife of Britain's UN Ambassador Mark Lyall and her German (5) **counterpart**, Huberta von Voss-Wittig, ask Mrs Assad to "(6) **stand** up for peace...for the (7) **sake** of your people". The video contrasts the glamorous lifestyle of Mrs Assad with that of Syrian women running for their lives in battle-(8) **scarred** Syrian streets.

Mrs Assad, 36, was born and (9) **raised** in west London. She married her husband Bashar al-Assad in 2000, the year he became Syrian president. She has spent the (10) **past** decade looking after her husband's international image. She has recently come under (11) **criticism** for her shopping expeditions in luxury London stores while 7,000 opposition Syrians lost their lives in (12) **various** Syrian cities. The video addresses her by her first name many times to make the (13) **plea** more personal. A voice says: "Some women care for (14) **style**, and some women care for their people. Some women struggle for their image, and some women (15) **struggle** for survival." It reminds Asma that: "No one cares about your image we care about your (16) **actions**."

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - c 3 - b 4 - a 5 - c 6 - d 7 - b 8 - a 9 - b 10 - c 11 - a 12 - d